

Hunsrik

Hunsrik (*Hunsrik*^[5] or *Hunsrückisch*^[1], locally [hunsɾɪk]), also called **Riograndenser Hunsrückisch**, is a Moselle Franconian language derived primarily from the Hunsrückisch dialect of West Central German. The language has some recognition mainly in Brazil. It is an integral part of the historical and cultural heritage of Rio Grande do Sul since 2012, and is considered an imaterial cultural heritage of Santa Catarina since 2016.^{[6][7]} It is also a co-official language in the municipalities of Antônio Carlos, Santa Maria do Herval and São João do Oeste.^{[8][9][10]} In Brazil, Hunsrik is spoken in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Paraná. The language is also spoken in some regions of the Northeast of Argentina and Southeast of Paraguay.^[11]

Hunsrik developed from the Hunsrückisch dialect when immigrants from the Hunsrück region of Germany (Rhineland-Palatinate) settled in southern regions such as Rio Grande do Sul, starting by imperial designs in 1824 (these later became projects controlled by states and finally by private European investment enterprises).

While primarily based on the Hunsrückisch branch of the German language, it has also been greatly influenced by other German dialects such as East Pomeranian and Plautdietsch, and by Portuguese, the national language of Brazil. It has been influenced to a lesser extent by indigenous languages such as Kaingang and Guaraní and by immigrant languages such as Italian and Talian.

Portuguese expressions and words are commonly imported into Hunsrik, particularly in reference to fauna and flora (which are different from those of Germany) and to technological innovations that did not exist when the original immigrants came to Brazil, leading to words like *Aviong* for airplane (Portuguese *avião*) instead of *Flugzeug*, *Kamiong* (Pt. *caminhão*, truck) instead of *Lastwagen*, *Tëlevisong* (Pt. *televisão*) instead of *Fernseher*, etc. Daily expressions are often calques (literal translations) of Portuguese, for example *alles gut* ("how are you", literally "all good") is from Portuguese *tudo bem*.

Also common are the use of German suffixes attached to Portuguese words, such as *Canecache*, "little mug", from Portuguese *caneca*, "mug", and German diminutive suffix *chen* (*-che* in Hunsrik); hybrid forms such as *Schuhloja*, "shoe shop", from German *Schuh* and Portuguese *loja*, and Germanized forms of Portuguese verbs: *lembreere*, "to remember"; *namoreere* "to flirt"; *respondeere*, "to answer" (Portuguese *lembrar*,

<i>Hunsrik</i>	
<i>Riograndenser Hunsrückisch</i>	
Pronunciation	[hunsɾɪk]
Native to	Brazil <div>Rio Grande do Sul</div> <div>Santa Catarina</div> <div>Paraná</div> <div>Argentina ^[1]<div>Misiones</div></div> <div>Paraguay ^[1]</div>
Region	South America
Native speakers	3,000,000 ^[2]
Language family	Indo-European <ul style="list-style-type: none">Germanic<ul style="list-style-type: none">West Germanic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Irminonic<ul style="list-style-type: none">High German<ul style="list-style-type: none">Central German<ul style="list-style-type: none">Moselle Franconian<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Hunsrik</i>
Writing system	Latin
Official status	
Official language in	Brazil ^[3] <ul style="list-style-type: none">Antônio CarlosSanta Maria do HervalSão João do Oeste
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	hrx
Glottolog	riog1239 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/riog1239) ^[4]

namorar, and *responder*). However, regardless of these borrowings, its grammar and vocabulary are still largely German.

Although Hunsrik is the most common Germanic language in south Brazil, the use of this language—particularly in the last three to four generations—continues to decrease. Glottolog classifies the language as "shifting" on its Agglomerated Endangerment Status.^[12]

(6) Gespräch uff Riograndenser Hunsrückisch mit Selma Beppler - im Mitte von 2012 uffgenoom.



<https://www.youtube.com/embed/N11sro7hDYI>

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History

In Germany

The Hunsrückisch dialect, from which Hunsrik derived, has its origins in the Moselle Franconian dialects spoken in the Hunsrück region, on the banks of the Rhine and Moselle rivers, in western Germany. Germany, as a national state, only unified in 1871, so the standard German existing today was, until the 19th century, a literary language, created by Martin Luther in his famous translation of the Bible. The German people, in their daily lives, did not use standard German to communicate, but several regional dialects.^[13]

Until around 1800, Standard German was primarily a written language in Germany. Standard German was often learned as a foreign language and had an uncertain pronunciation. With the country's unification process and the mass literacy of the population, standard German has become the language used by speakers of different dialects to understand each other, although regional dialects have remained the language used at home.^[14]

In Brazil

With German immigration to Brazil, over the past two centuries, German dialects have also come to establish themselves as a regional language. However, something curious happened: while in Germany standard German served for speakers of different dialects to communicate, in Brazil, due to the still incipient

consolidation of standard German when immigration started, this role was played by the Hunsrückisch dialect.^[15] There are two hypotheses for this phenomenon. The first because most immigrants would have come from Hunsrück, so their dialect predominated. The second because Hunsrückisch has intermediate features between the different German dialects, so it served as a koiné between speakers of various dialects. What is known is that German immigrants in Brazil came from different parts of Germany, so Hunsrik-speaking Brazilians do not necessarily descend from people from Hunsrück.^[15] In these German communities, the Hunsrückisch dialect remained the main language of communication for several decades. German colonies in the South were usually formed in regions of forest depopulated or inhabited by Indians, who were expelled for the arrival of immigrants. Due to this isolation, the Germans managed to create a "linguistic island", in which German was the main language, and not Portuguese.^[16] At the beginning of the 20th century, there were hundreds of thousands of second- and third-generation German-Brazilians who could barely speak Portuguese. This differentiation favored the feeling of a minority group, which allied itself with the formation of solid ethnic institutions, such as schools, churches, social associations and a German-language press. All of these elements combined promoted a general feeling of "cultural group".^[17]

In 1930, there were 2,500 ethnic schools in Brazil. Of these, 1,579 were from German immigrants.^[18] In these schools, children learned the standard German that is spread in Germany. This linguistic and cultural isolation was combated aggressively by the nationalist government of Getúlio Vargas, through the nationalization campaign. All German schools in the country were closed, annihilating the German-Brazilian middle school. The standard German learned at school was thus eliminated, greatly weakening the use of German in urban centers, which became limited to the countryside. People were harassed and beaten if they spoke German on the street. The police inspected people's private lives, breaking into houses to burn books written in German, or languages other than Portuguese. Many people were arrested for the simple fact that they speak German. In 1942, 1.5% of the inhabitants of Blumenau were imprisoned for speaking German.^{[19][20][21]} The closure of schools has caused people to become increasingly attached to the German dialect used in everyday life, far from standard German.^[16]

Language Name

Because of the initial lack of an official grammar and for being not governed by a centralized entity, there is a plurality as to the nomenclature used for the language. Adriano Steffler developed a "Hunsrik Grammar", a "Hunsrik Dictionary" and a form of the Latin alphabet with 45 letters of which 25 are traditional of the alphabet (however, without Q) and the remaining 20 are other non-traditional letters of the same alphabet, and also Cyrillic, Armenian, Coptic, and Greek. The grammar developed by this project is not currently applied in any teaching method or government initiative, but it is considered one of the first efforts to standardize the language.^[22]

Currently, the language has two codification proposals. The first, from the SIL International, is led by professor and doctor Ursula Wiesemann and has a approach more focused on using the writing system used naturally by its native speakers in everyday actions, such as interpersonal interaction and the use of social networks. With a strong influence of the Latin alphabet used in Portuguese, it has the native name of *Hunsrik*, with the aim of distinguishing it as a unique Germanic language and not just as a dialect of the German language.^[23] This codification is applied in the teaching of municipal schools in Santa Maria do Herval, Estância Velha and Nova Hartz, as well as in other municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul.^[5] The name *hunsrik* can also be used officially to refer to the language in English and Portuguese, being officially called "Hunsrik Language" by most federative entities that recognize it in Brazil.^{[7][9][24]} The spelling translated into Portuguese as "Brazilian *Hunsrückisch*" is also accepted by the project, however the preference is for the use of the previous one to generate a clearer differentiation of the language.^[25]

The second coding project, from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, is led by doctor and professor Cléo Vilson Altenhofen and has a more unionist approach to the German language, characterized by the preservation of the writing of the German Hunsrückisch dialect with few variations.^[26] This project

recommends the spelling *Hunsrückisch* to refer to the dialect in its native form,^[1] with *Hunsrickisch* being an alternative as a way to emphasize the pronunciation of the word. At the same time, the project states that it refers to the same language denoted by Hunsrik in other projects and also accepts it as a spelling.^[27] The term *Hunsrückisch* is also used officially in statements by some federal entities.^{[6][8]} To differentiate the dialect used in Brazil from that used in Germany, Altenhofen called the Brazilian dialect *Riograndenser Hunsrückisch* (with reference to the state of Rio Grande do Sul). This nomenclature, however, is criticized by other scholars, since there are also considerable numbers of native speakers in other Brazilian states, as well as in other countries.^[28]

Currently, UNESCO officially uses the Hunsrik spelling to refer to the language in its native form, made official with that name after studies by Ethnologue, an official advisory institution of the international body and whose publications are led by SIL International. The Hunsrik spelling is also used by Glottolog in its bibliographic database of the least known languages in the world, catalog of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. Other international bodies that use this native spelling in the recognition of Hunsrik as a language are the Open Language Archives Community (OLAC) from the University of Pennsylvania and the International Organization for Standardization, the latter assigns the **hrx** code as ISO 639-3 for the Hunsrik language.^{[29][30]} In some municipalities in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, the language is also called *Deutsch* (Altenhofen) or *Taytx* (Wiesemann), in clear reference to its roots in standard German.^[31]

Notable speakers

Recent Roman Catholic papal candidate Odilo Scherer^[32] of Cerro Largo (located in the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul) grew up with this language as many from his native region did, using it side-by-side with Portuguese, the national language.

Roman Catholic Cardinal Cláudio Hummes of Montenegro, Rio Grande do Sul (in the *Altkolonie* region of the state), grew up speaking Portuguese alongside this regional variety of German.^[33]

According to supermodel Gisele Bündchen, while her parents and siblings still speak this Brazilian regional variety of German, she has forgotten everything herself.^[34]

During an interview in 2011, renowned Brazilian writer, translator and international relations professor Aldyr Schlee talked in detail about having been an eyewitness to the repression of the German language in his native state of Rio Grande do Sul during World War II.

Approximate distribution of native speakers of German or a German variety outside Europe
 (according to Ethnologue 2016^[35] unless referenced otherwise)
 Numbers of speakers should not be summed up per country, as they most likely overlap considerably.
 Table includes varieties with disputed statuses as separate language.

	<u>Standard German</u>	<u>Hunsrik/Hunsrückisch</u>	<u>Low German & Plautdietsch</u>	<u>Pennsylvania Dutch</u>	<u>Hutterite</u>
<u>Argentina</u>	400,000	N/A	4,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Australia</u>	79,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Belize</u>	N/A	N/A	9,360	N/A	N/A
<u>Bolivia</u>	160,000	N/A	60,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Brazil</u>	1,500,000	3,000,000	8,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Canada</u>	430,000	N/A	80,000	15,000	23,200
<u>Chile</u>	35,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Costa Rica</u>	N/A	N/A	2,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Israel</u>	200,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Kazakhstan</u>	30,400	N/A	100,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Mexico</u>	N/A	N/A	40,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Namibia</u>	22,500	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>New Zealand</u>	36,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Paraguay</u>	166,000	N/A	40,000	N/A	N/A
<u>Russia</u>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>South Africa</u>	12,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<u>Uruguay</u>	28,000	N/A	2,000	N/A	N/A
<u>United States</u>	1,104,354 ^[36]	N/A	12,000	118,000	10,800
<i>Sum</i>	4,597,392	3,000,000	357,360	133,000	34,000

Phonology

Vowels

Spelling (Wiesemann) ^[37]	A	AA	AY	AU	E	EE	Ë	EY	I	II	O	OO	OY	U	UU
Spelling (Altenhofen et al.) ^[38]	A	OO	EI	AU	E	E, EE, EH	E	EE	I	I, IE	O	O, OH	EU	U	U, UH
Pronunciation	/a/	/ɔː/ ~ /aː/	/aɪ/	/aʊ/	/ə/	/eː/	/e/ ~ /ɛ/	eɪ	/i/	/iː/	/o ~ ɔ/	/oː/	/ɔɪ/	/u/	/uː/

Consonants

	<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Labiodental</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Postalveolar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Uvular</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Plosive</u>	⟨ph⟩ ⟨p⟩ /pʰ/, ⟨p⟩ ⟨b⟩ /p/		⟨th⟩ ⟨t⟩ /tʰ/, ⟨t⟩ ⟨d⟩ /t/			⟨kh⟩ ⟨k⟩ /kʰ/, ⟨k⟩ ⟨g⟩ /k/		
<u>Affricate</u>			⟨ts⟩ ⟨z, tz⟩ /ts/	⟨tx⟩ ⟨tsch⟩ / tʃ/				
<u>Fricative</u>		⟨f⟩ ⟨f, v⟩ /f/, ⟨w⟩ ⟨w⟩ /v/	⟨s⟩ ⟨s, ss⟩ /s/	⟨x⟩ ⟨sch⟩ / ʃ/	⟨c⟩ ⟨ch⟩ / ç/	⟨ch⟩ ⟨ch⟩ / χ~x/		⟨h⟩ ⟨h⟩ /h/
<u>Nasal</u>	⟨m⟩ ⟨m⟩ /m/		⟨n⟩ ⟨m⟩ /n/			⟨ng, n⟩ ⟨ng, n⟩ /ŋ/		
<u>Approximant</u>			⟨l⟩ ⟨l⟩ /l/		⟨y⟩ ⟨j⟩ /j/			
<u>Rhotic</u>			⟨r⟩ ⟨r⟩ /r/					

Orthography between plain angle brackets follows Wiesemann's^[37] orthography and between italic angle brackets follows Altenhofen et al.'s^[38] orthography.

The contrast between plosives is not of voice, but of articulatory force, a phenomenon observed in some other dialects of German.

Sample

Chapter 23, 1–5 of Luke's Gospel in Hunsrik, according to Dr. Ursula Wiesemann's^[37] orthography:

Yeesus un Pilatos

23 Too sin ti kanse layt uf kextii, hon Yeesus pis Pilatos kenom un hon aan kefang aan se këwe un saare: 2 Mëyer hon too te man aan ketrof unser folek am uf hëtse. Tee is te keeche em khayser xtayer petsaale un saat wëyer te Mësiias un Kheenich. 3 Too hot te Pilatos kefroot: Pixt tu te Yute sayne Kheenich? Is woer, hot Yeesus keantwort. 4 Too hot Pilatos fer te hooche priister un tsum folek kesaat: Ich khan kee xult an tëm man fine! 5 Awer tii hon aan kehal un hon kesaat: Tee tuut unortnung aan richte unich em folek mit sayn untricht iweraal in Yuteeya. In Kalileeya hot er aan kefang, un yëts is er too pay uns.

The same text in Standard German:

23 Und die ganze Versammlung stand auf, und sie führten ihn vor Pilatus. 2 Sie fingen aber an, ihn zu verklagen und sprachen: Wir haben gefunden, dass dieser das Volk verführt und es davon abhalten will, dem Kaiser die Steuern zu zahlen. Er behauptet, er sei Christus, der König. 3 Da fragte ihn Pilatus und sprach: Bist du der König der Juden? Er antwortete ihm und sprach: Du sagst es! 4 Da sprach Pilatus zu den obersten Priestern und der Volksmenge: Ich finde keine Schuld an diesem Menschen! 5 Sie aber bestanden darauf und sprachen: Er wiegelt das Volk auf, indem er in ganz Judäa lehrt, angefangen in Galiläa bis hierher!^[39]

(23 And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King." 3 And Pilate asked him, saying, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" And he answered him and

said, "Thou sayest it." 4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, "I find no fault in this man." 5 And they were the more fierce, saying, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.")

See also

- [Geographical distribution of German speakers](#)
- [Brazilian German](#)
- [German Brazilians](#)

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External links

- Os imigrantes alemães e a sua cozinha/German Immigrants and Their Cuisine (https://web.archive.org/web/20041102035327/http://www.brasilalemanha.com.br/cozinha_alema.htm) (in Portuguese and German)
- Deutsche Minderheiten (<https://web.archive.org/web/20050415020802/http://viadrina.eu/frankfurt-o.de/~sw1www/publikation/lateinam.htm>) in Latin America (Riograndenser Hunsrückisch) (in German)
- Riograndenser Hunsrückisch (https://web.archive.org/web/20090503154546/http://www.dw-world.de/brazil/0,3367,7187_A_1174391_1_A,00.html) article on Deutsche Welle (in Portuguese)
- Katharinensisch (http://www.mek.iif.hu/porta/szint/human/szepirod/modern/lenard_s/sieben/sieben.htm#cim2) (German – out of the various titles, seek the one titled Katharinensisch)
- YouTube video interview with Hunsrückisch speaker from the town of Roque Gonzales, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N11sro7hDYI>).
- YouTube video with documentary *Viver no Brasil falando Hunsrückisch* (Living in Brazil speaking Hunsrückisch) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncN4dkcrU9M>).
- YouTube video conversation between two Hunsrückisch speakers from Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXWbB-KpN_8).
- YouTube video interview with Hunsrückisch speaker from the town of Biguaçu, Santa Catarina, Brazil (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDHUVU4lu6w&mode=related&search=>).
- YouTube video interview with a couple of Hunsrückisch speakers from the town of Biguaçu, Santa Catarina, Brazil (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVIAB3OIfE&mode=related&search=>).

- [Portuguese-Hunsrik online dictionary \(https://hunsriqueanoriograndense.wordpress.com/dicionario-werterbuch/\)](https://hunsriqueanoriograndense.wordpress.com/dicionario-werterbuch/)
 - [Information at Omniglot \(https://www.omniglot.com/writing/hunsrik.htm\)](https://www.omniglot.com/writing/hunsrik.htm)
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